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Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004)

Note verbale dated 1 November 2004 from the Permanent Mission of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee

The Permanent Mission of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Chairman of the Committee and, with reference to his note dated 21 June 2004, requesting a report from Member States on steps they have taken or intend to take to implement Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), has the honour to submit herewith the enclosed report of the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (see annex).

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Annex to the note verbale dated 1 November 2004 from the Permanent Mission of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee

[Original: Arabic]

First report of Saudi Arabia to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004)

This report has been prepared in accordance with paragraph 4 of resolution 1540 (2004) for submission to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to rule 28 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

1. Saudi Arabia, which is aware of the devastating effects associated with the production and use of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, whether by States or by non-State actors, is convinced that the proliferation of such weapons and their means of delivery constitutes a threat to international peace and security. Saudi Arabia has repeatedly called, and calls once again, for an end to the production, use, possession, transport and stockpiling of these weapons, given their devastating effects at the national, regional and international levels.

2. At the international level, Saudi Arabia's commitment to non-proliferation prompted it to its accede to the major treaties and conventions on nuclear, biological and chemical weapons of mass destruction; to the Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare; and to the Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Seabed and on the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof. This is the official position of Saudi Arabia, which is playing an active role in efforts to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Saudi Arabia would, in fact, like to see weapons of mass destruction totally eliminated, in order to safeguard international peace and security. It has, moreover, supported the relevant United Nations resolutions on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction adopted each year by the General Assembly, such as resolution 58/46, "Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons"; resolution 58/47, "Reducing nuclear danger"; resolution 58/56, "Nuclear disarmament"; resolution 58/48, "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction"; and resolution 58/59, "A path to the total elimination of nuclear weapons".

3. At the regional level, Saudi Arabia has consistently supported efforts to eliminate all weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East, as done in other regions, which have thus achieved stability and peace. It has supported the relevant General Assembly resolutions, such as resolution 58/34, "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East"; and resolution 58/68, "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East". Saudi Arabia has also been taking part in the meetings of the committee entrusted with drafting a treaty on the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, since it was set up in 1994.

4. In order to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, Saudi Arabia has taken a number of steps and adopted legislation

to implement the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. These measures prohibit the development, production, use, possession, stockpiling, retention and transport, directly or indirectly, of chemical weapons, and impose appropriate penalties, such as imprisonment and fines, on those who violate the Convention. In accordance with the Convention, these measures have also been adopted with a view to regulating the chemicals referred to in the three schedules set out in an annex to the Convention. Saudi Arabia has, moreover, initiated contact with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in order to negotiate the conclusion of a Small Quantities Protocol to be annexed to a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, in accordance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. With respect to the Biological Weapons Convention, Saudi Arabia participates regularly in the meetings of the ad hoc group of States parties to the Convention responsible for ensuring implementation of all aspects of the Convention and monitoring the strengthening of measures to combat proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Saudi Arabia also participates in the Conference of States Parties. In both cases, Saudi Arabia has submitted working papers giving a full listing of the measures taken in implementation of the Convention.

5. Saudi Arabia, as a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and as an active member of the IAEA Board of Governors, wishes to stress that it attaches great importance to strengthening the provisions of the Convention, as well as the role of IAEA in the area of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, including the total elimination of such weapons, so that international peace and security can be achieved. Saudi Arabia attaches particular importance to measures to monitor movements of nuclear material and its use, and to the role played by the International Nuclear Safety Advisory Group.

6. The competent Saudi Arabian authorities have also taken measures to monitor the entry of chemicals and radioactive materials at border crossing points. No such materials may be brought into the country without prior authorization by the competent authority. Saudi Arabia is developing a comprehensive national system to provide protection from ionizing radiation, to supplement the procedures already in place, and is also standardizing joint efforts so as to be able to deal appropriately with the threats posed by radiation sources and to ensure safety in that area.

7. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is an extremely serious matter, since such weapons could fall into the hands of non-State actors and could be used by terrorist groups, among others. In the context of the introduction of special measures for monitoring nuclear and radioactive materials, and of efforts to combat illicit trade in such materials, Saudi Arabia is taking steps to strengthen mechanisms for monitoring the transport of radioactive, nuclear and other dangerous materials, and for detecting smuggling of such materials, at border crossing points.